PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

BULLETIN] DECEMBER 6, 1941 [No. 73

LECTURE LXXIII.

CURRENT EVENTS—A REVIEW.

by

Wickham Steed.

(*In a recent B. B. C. Talk*).

There are lots of things to think about and the best way to think about them is, I believe, to remember that our main job in this war is to beat Germany and then to ask how we are getting on with the job.

We can't expect the Government and the people who really have inside information to tell us all they know. In the House of Commons on November 12 the Prime Minister emitted a few pungent sentences on this very point.

He said "It is a month since I remarked upon the long silence of Herr Hitler—a remark which provoked him to make a speech, in which he told the German people that Moscow would fall in a few days. That prediction shows how much wiser he would have been to go on keeping his mouth shut".

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Recently Hitler has made another speech; it was so disjointed and incoherent that several different accounts of it were published in Germany and Dr. Goebbels found it hard to make head or tail of his beloved Fuehrer's ill-tempered eloquence.

He thought it all the harder because he himself has lately been writing articles that must have puzzled the German public more than they enlightened it.

There is in London a little newspaper written by liberal-minded Germans who watch Dr. Goebbels closely, and the other day this paper wrote "Those who have followed the propaganda of Goebbels since last July get the impression that he has been wrestling all the time with a dumb opponent, with a spirit of impatience, of doubt and weariness, with a growing dullness of a public mind which no longer cares for military successes and merely puts one mute question 'When is it all going to end?".

If this is true, it explains why Dr. Goebbels, in his latest outburst, should have written that it is no longer a question of when the war will end but how it will end. It explains also why Hitler should have exclaimed in his Munich beerhouse speech "Anything is conceivable, except one thing—that Germany should ever capitulate".

This is rather different from his earlier announcement of swift victory for the irresistible and invincible armed might of Nazi Germany. The Germans may find it depressing—I find it encouraging. It means that we and the Russians are really getting on with the job.

Despite the sad loss of the *Ark Royal*, so often sunk by German propaganda in the past, other things are encouraging too.

It is not a small matter that the Prime Minister should have been able to tell the House of Commons that our losses of tonnage at sea, which were 500,000 tons a month in March, April, May and June, were reduced in July, August, September and October to 180,000 tons a month and that the facts are still more favourable than this reduction suggests.

Nor is it insignificant that Mr. Churchill should have revealed some of the information supplied by Hitler's former Deputy Fuehrer, Rudolf Hess, during his sojourn in our midst. According to Hess, Hitler relied upon starving us out even more than upon invasion to bring us to our knees, and again pungently, Mr. Churchill reminded us that Hitler's failure to starve us out only increases his need to come at us directly, as soon as he can screw up his courage, and can make his arrangements to take the plunge.

I have no doubt that Hitler will try to come at us directly by some sort of invasion, if and when he can find winter quarters for his armies in Russia, or if he can stabilise the Russian front.

I say "if and when" because the latest German reports from the Russian front,—not the official military bulletins, but the accounts which German soldiers are allowed to broadcast to the German public —suggest that Hitler's fighters are by no means cock-a-hoop.

These broadcasts describe the terrible difficulties of fighting in mud and cold, and one of them speaking of the cold said: "We can't sleep more than three hours—then it gets too cold. The cold creeps through our coats and coverings."

Yet the real Russian cold is only beginning. When I heard these German wireless reports I thought of some verses, called "St. Helena Lullaby", which Kipling once wrote on Napoleon's Russian adventure and on the disasters suffered during the passage of the Beresina River on November 25, 1812.

The lines run :—

How far is St. Helena from the Beresina ice?
And ill way, a chill way, the ice begins to crack,
But not so far for gentlemen who never took advice.
When you can't go forward. you must e'en go back.

Hitler is still trying desperately to go forward to Moscow, though without any great success as far as we can judge, and if he finds he can't go forward he may have to go back, and then some of his Generals who warned him against the Russian adventure might not be pleased with "the gentlemen who never took advice".

One thing Hitler would certainly like to do if he can't go forward in Russia and if he's not ready to take the plunge against England,—he would like to make a grand attack on Egypt from Libya. Not only is he keeping a considerable number of troops in Italy but he has been reinforcing them with every regiment he can spare, and he has been trying to send convoy after convoy from Naples and other Italian ports to Libya in preparation for the attack.

This is where our repeated bombings of Naples and Italo-German bases in Sicily come in, and this is why the devastation which the navy has again inflicted upon Italo-German convoys seems likely to put a very big spoke into Hitler's wheel. [And—since this was written—this is where General Auchinleck's Eighth Army comes in, too! Ed.]

Ten supply ships and three Italian destroyers sent to the bottom early one morning, without a scratch on the British warships or a casualty among their crews, is something for which I can remember no precedent in naval history, and, except on the assumption that the heart of Italian sailors is not in this war, I can't account for the conduct of the two heavy Italian cruisers in skedaddling from two British cruisers of half their size.

What has happened inclines us to agree with the Prime Minister's words to the House of Commons when he said "All this makes me hopeful, although, of course, I will not promise, that the German and Italian boasts that they would take Suez by the end of last May are very likely to remain unfulfilled at Christmas". [The battle of the Quadrilateral inclines us to agree even more strongly. Ed.]

Though it is dangerous to prophecy in wartime, most of us like to feel that our timid forecasts have not been altogether wide of the mark. Listeners may remember that, when the Germans attacked Greece and drove us out of Crete last spring, I expressed the belief that the heroic resistance of the Greeks and the sturdy fighting of the British and Dominion troops had seriously upset Hitler's time-table in the Near and Middle East and might affect his plans elsewhere.

Now confirmation of this view has reached London in the form of a careful report from Ankara, the capital of Turkey. It shows how the defeats sustained by Italy in Greece and then in Libya and Abyssinia spoilt the Italo-German plan for the conquest of the Middle East, and, since Russia could not be persuaded to play the German game, have induced Hitler to give up the idea of invading Egypt through Turkey and to attack Russia as soon as possible.

Hitler took this decision nearly a year ago. Before attacking Russia, as he meant to do last May, he wished to crush Greece and then Crete. He hoped to finish with Greece in two or three weeks, but the Yugoslavs under General Simovitch, delayed him, and Greek and British resistance cost him still more precious times.

Consequently Hitler's attack on Russia could only be launched on June 22 instead of in May as had been intended. Nobody can tell how far this loss of time will effect the issue of the struggle in Russia or help

to decide the outcome of the war, yet one can say that Hitler's failure to break Russian resistance, as he hoped to do has caused doubt to spread as to whether he can win the war at all.

Doubt of this kind is much more dangerous to Hitler than it was to Great Britain last year, for even the United States feared that Britain would be overwhelmed. Then we stood almost alone and could certainly not command or compel other countries to come to our aid, but Hitler has either trampled upon many other countries or has persuaded them to join him in the hope of sharing his victory.

Those who hoped to share his victory would be less eager to share his defeat, and the scores of millions whom he has trampled upon might imitate the gallant Yugoslavs, who even now are holding his forces in check. [If Wickham Steed seems almost to have foreseen that to-day's papers should publish a Cairo communiqué headed "The Serbian Front" !! Ed.]

The end is not yet in sight; Hitler will strive with might and main to stave it off for he knows well that his prestige and his power will decrease by leaps and bounds at the first clear sign that defeat awaits him.

Nowhere are his chances more anxiously depleted than at Tokyo. The Japanese Prime Minister, General Tojo tells the sober truth when he says that Japan is at the parting of the ways. It's easy to see why Japan finds it hard to choose one way rather than the other. Ever since she invaded Manchuria ten years ago, her policy has been so unwise that it leaves her now with only a choice between two evils—war against Great Britain and the United States, and failure in her attempt to conquer China and Eastern Asia and to rule the Pacific.

Mr. Kurusu, her special envoy to Washington, will at any rate be under no illusions after the downright statement, made by Mr. Winston Churchill, that should the United States become involved in war with Japan the British declaration of war would follow within the hour.

Nor will the Japanese Government have misunderstood the importance of the Prime Minister's further announcement that the cooperation of the United States now enables us to provide a powerful force of heavy ships and other vessels, for service, if needed, in the Indian and Pacific oceans.

Alongside of these, for us heartening, and for Japan depressing words, Mr. Winston Churchill used the one word which I have never heard or read before. It was the word "unsordid" and it is the right word in the right place. After speaking of the majestic policy of the President and Congress of the United States in passing the Lease and Lend Bill, and saying "Never again let us hear the taunt that money is the ruling power in the hearts and thoughts of the American Democracy", he described the Lease and Lend Bill as "the most unsordid Act in the whole of recorded history".

He was speaking before the Washington House of Representatives carried the policy of the United States a step further by revising the Neutrality Act so that American merchant vessels could thenceforth enter the war zone and deliver goods direct to the Allies.

But his word "unsordid" defined at once the Lease and Lend Act, the policy of the United States and the whole character of this war for freedom. [How far will world opinion use so handsome an epithet about the politics of non-co-operative INDIA ?! Ed.]

The people who will fight and work for freedom know that they are writing the most glorious, because the least sordid, page in the annals of mankind; and many of us rejoice that the British Prime Minister should have been the first to bestow a great title of honour upon the Government and Congress of the United States, the recognition of the most constructively revolutionary deed on record in the material relationship international.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

28—11—41 to 4—12—41.

The Libyan Campaign. A Marvellous Change-over.—The days of miracles are perhaps over but the marvellous feat performed by the British Navy, during the six weeks preceding the present Libyan offensive in effecting a complete change-over in personnel and equipment in the TOBRUK defence under the very nose of the Axis Desert forces is hardly short of a miracle. The original garrison at TOBRUK was largely Australian and for seven months past this gallant army had borne, unbroken and unceasingly the heat and burden of the siege. The change-over was carried out to give these soldiers a much-needed rest and to prepare them for a fresh offensive. The new garrison consists mostly of fresh British troops, with a sprinkling of Poles and Czechs, from ALEXANDRIA.

Relief of Tobruk.—On Wednesday last the TOBRUK garrison effected a junction with the main advancing British Forces and to this happy result the TOBRUK defenders made their own contribution by numerous sorties carried out over 6 days. The line of contact was also extended to a width of six miles by the capture of EL HAMID; but in a desperate attempt the enemy has since recaptured EL HAMID and SIDI REZEGH also, (though the British still hold EL DUDA) and has thus succeeded in temporarily breaking the TOBRUK corridor. In a fresh tank plus infantry battle in the SOLLUM—SIDI OMAR—SIDI REZEGH triangle, the whole of the Italian BOLOGNA Division was annihilated when it made an attempt to join up with a Panzer Division and the German General Von Ravenstein of the 21st Panzer Division has been taken prisoner.

The arena of encounter has changed from a triangle to a parallelogram with TOBRUK, SOLLUM, SIDI OMAR and BIR EL GOBI at the corners. While the Axis hold one side, south of TOBRUK, British and Imperial forces hold the other three sides. The enemy has been isolated along the Libyan coast, but he is 40,000 strong and after the immediate lull (for rest and re-formation on both sides) there is bound to be severe fighting.

Supplies.—It is clear that the enemy, already short of supplies, is making desperate efforts to get his reinforcements and equipments from across the sea. Frustrated by the frequent sinkings on the normal TRIPOLI-BENGHAZI route he is now attempting to pass convoys nearer the Greek coast. Fresh troops, largely Austrian in composition, are reported to have been massed at SALONIKA to be shipped to CRETE and thence convoyed to LIBYA under the escort of the *Luftwaffe.* But the British Navy and the R. A. F. are continually frustrating the attempt. In November alone, the last few days excepted, 41 enemy ships were sunk against 27 in October. Since the present offensive began 7 Italian ships, one cruiser, one destroyer, and one submarine were sunk in Central Mediterranean alone; and just a few days ago a British cruiser squadron carried out an extensive sweep, over 1,400 miles in the 'bomb-alley' between CYRENAICA and CRETE, that is in waters most vulnerable to enemy attacks from air, and returned unhurt after sinking two merchantmen found on the way. The latest news tells of the destruction of an enemy 10,000 ton tanker and a 1,996 ton supply ship carrying munitions.

The R. A. F.—The R. A. F. continues to maintain its ascendancy in LIBYA in spite of frantic Axis attempts to reinforce his air-arm. The enemy is concentrating his strength in the rear of rather than over the battle-line, which shows that he is more concerned with his supplies and his line of retreat. The ratio of Axis to Allied air losses is three to one. In the first six days the enemy's losses were 68 on the ground and 51 in the air of which 30 and 42 were respectively German.

The Tomahawks.—It is interesting to note that the American planes—particularly the Tomahawks, which the Germans predicted would all be sunk or destroyed before they reached their destination and described as being suited for training purposes only—are taking a valiant part and giving a very good account of themselves. In the thick of tank-battles they swoop almost to ground level and discharge their shells right into the bowels of the armoured vehicles. 'Tank-busting' is an aerial art first practised by the Russians on the eastern front with very damaging results and the Tomahawks are now reinforcing the lesson in LIBYA.

The German Retreat.—The Russian recapture of ROSTOV and the disorderly retreat of Von Kleist's army past TAGANROG, towards MARIUPOL amount to major German disaster. ROSTOV is the first important strategic position which the enemy has been compelled to abandon. Four of his divisions have been wiped out.

In impotent rage the enemy characterises his flight as a 'voluntary movement', complains of insurgence on the part of ROSTOV's civilian population in violation of international law (as if he knew and practised any law human or humane), and threatens to come back to ROSTOV to inflict an aerial punishment worse than at WARSAW. Whatever the threat may mean, the fact remains that Timoshenko's victorious forces are now pushing the Germans back, without allowing them a moment's relaxation to reform their forces. If this advance can be maintained, the Nazis will be driven to the Dniester and, the sea of Azov and, it may be, also be obliged to lift the siege round Moscow, LENINGRAD and SEVASTOPOL. Such would mean the undoing of all the German endeavour of all the past months.

The Battle for Moscow continues with unabated vigour. According to the latest news the position at KLIN is unchanged. At VOLOKALAMSK the enemy has effected a slight penetration while at MOJAISK, MALOYAROSLAVETS, and STALINOGORSK—BELOVS he has been beaten off. At TULA the Soviet troops have definitely advanced while at KALININ a fierce battle is raging with the initiative still with the Russians. Though 39 German divisions have been massed and are making the most desperate efforts at the approaches Moscow continues to be a will-o'-the-wisp luring and eluding the enemy. The advance, if any, has been at snail's speed, and the Russians taunt that the Germans manage to seize only as much territory at a time as is required to bury those who have died to capture it appears justified. ROME Radio tries to belittle the failure by stating that the Germans having made their plans to winter outside the city need be in no hurry to take it. These plans appear a bit crazy when judged by the women's jumpers and towels in which German prisoners are caught.

In the LENINGRAD area, while the Russians admit the evacuation of TIKHVIN, the Germans confess their inability to prevent supplies from reaching the city from the interior. The Finnish claim to have taken

HANGOE is not borne out. The German announcement of the capture of BALACLAVA is unconfirmed but the threat to SEVASTOPOL is said to be growing.

The Northern sector of the Russian front is dominated by British aircraft, even as the Moscow sector bears witness to the magnificent fighting of the British tanks. M. Stalin has borne personal testimony to this British help. In a telegram he sent to Lord Beaverbrook on November 29 he stated: "Let me express my gratitude for the sending of planes and tanks. Some of the British-made planes and tanks are already in action in the front line. The reports of commanders on British-made tanks are favourable. The Hurricanes are greatly appreciated. We would like as many Hurricanes as you can send".

FAR-EAST.

Bluff and Bluster.—JAPAN's game of bluff would be comic at a less serious hour. As the *Times* aptly puts it, her bluster is the diplomatic equivalent of the fire-works, tom-tom and cries by which huntsmen trap game in the East. It is evident that while her intentions continue to be sinister, she plays for a short armistice in order to stengthen and consolidate her bases, to store more oil and rubber of which she is in sore need, and also in order to watch her Axis partners in RUSSIA and LIBYA and to discover which way the wind blows. She is not likely to take any precipitate steps at the moment of her partners' set-backs in these two theatres of War.

She has however been landing reinforcements in French INDO-CHINA far in excess of the agreement, while her emissaries, Kurusu and Company have been plying AMERICA with peace talks. Rumours are afloat of JAPAN's preparations for a lightning attack on THAILAND, the BURMA Road and VLADIVOSTOK either concurrently or consecutively. A HSINKING message says that on Monday a clash occurred in the Eastern MANCHUKUO frontier in which two Soviet soldiers were killed.

It is clear that President Roosevelt intends to stand no more nonsense. His Government has asked JAPAN for an explanation of her recent military moves into INDO-CHINA and towards THAILAND, and he has also personally intervened in the negotiations in WASHINGTON.

Whatever may be the final result of these conferences, it is certain that JAPAN cannot now take the Allies by surprise. Important naval forces headed by H. M. S. the *Prince of Wales* have arrived in SINGAPORE waters. In HONG KONG troops have been cautioned to stand by. AUSTRALIA has held a special Cabinet meeting to make final arrangements to meet the crisis. It is also reported that the UNITED STATES, BRITAIN and Free-FRANCE are building together a chain of island fortresses traversing the 5,000 miles of the Pacific from HAWAII to AUSTRALIA.

The End of the Italian East African Empire.—General Vasi the Italian Commander, surrendered GONDAR on Thursday, November 27, and a final total of 11,500 Italians and 12,400 native troops became our prisoners. The fall of this fortress, the last remaining Italian stronghold in ABYSSINIA completes the conquest and annihilation of Mussoloni's boasted East African empire.

The Loss of the Sydney.—The loss of the Australian cruiser *Sydney* 300 miles west of CARNARVON (West AUSTRALIA) is announced by the Australian Government. Her full compliment of 42 officers and 603men are missing. It is believed that she fell a prey to a German pocket-battleship while she was engaged in successful action against a notorious German raider, known as "*No. 41*". *No. 41* was sunk but the *Sydney* did not survive her victory.

Conscription.—On Tuesday Mr. Churchill introduced in the House of Commons his measure for conscripting all available man and woman power in the UNITED KINGDOM. When introducing this drastic legislation he pointed out that there were two vultures still hovering over BRITAIN, one the fear of an invasion and the other the recurrence of air-raids such as BRITAIN experienced last year. It would be the part of wisdom, he said, to be fully prepared against these dangers. In addition to the needs of Home defence, large armies required for foreign expedition had to be equipped. The demands of the air and naval forces would definitely increase in 1942 and 1943, and RUSSIA whose capacity for making munitions had suffered by the German invasion must be supplied with arms.

'The entire adult British race', as Mr. Churchill put it, "with hardly any exception is now engaged in unremitting national

service one way or another and the present legislation is only to ensure co-ordination".

It was not so much the calling-up of people who were already idle, he said, but the sharpening and shifting forward' of those who were already at work to more direct and definite war activities. It was a 'general moving-up nearer to the front', a 'definitely harder turning of the screw': another instalment of toil and sweat, inconvenience and self-denial.

The measure seeks to conscript both sexes of all ages from 16 to 50.

It is estimated that the passing of the bill will affect 2,328,000 more men and 1,620,000 more women.

Is Turkey an Ally Now?—Significant news comes from WASHINGTON that TURKEY has been included in the list of Lease and Lend beneficiaries. In making the announcement President Roosevelt stated that he considered the defence of TURKEY to be vital to the defence of AMERICA. There is no official information that TURKEY sought aid or that any negotiations had proceeded the present declaration, but so shrewd a leader as Mr. Roosevelt could hardly have taken so sensational a step unless he were assured that TURKEY was prepared to join the Allies at the proper time.

BRITISH and RUSSIAN Air Raids over ENEMY and ENEMY-occupied COUNTRIES.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
24—11—41. (Monday).				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
DAY :—				
	Enemy shipping off the DUTCH coast.		1 plane.	1 plane; many damaged.
NIGHT :—				
	No information available.			

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
24—11—41.	**(Monday)**—*cont.*			
	LIBYA.			
	Concentrations of enemy tanks, motor transport, armoured fighting vehicles as well as encampment stores and supply dumps in LIBYA.			
	Enemy motor transport west of EL ADEM.			
	Aerial combats in the JALO region.			1 plane; many damaged.
	The harbour at BENGHAZI.	Fire broke out.		
	Aerodromes at BERKA and BENINA.			2 planes.
	Air combat over the Central MEDITERRANEAN.			1 plane.
	ABYSSINIA.			
	A camp and castle at GONDAR.			
	Enemy positions in the GONDAR-AZOZO area.			
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes along the whole Front.		2 planes.	5 planes.
25—11—41.	**(Tuesday).**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
DAY :—				
	Enemy aircraft on the airfield at MARCK (near CALAIS).			
	The enemy aerodrome at MORLAI.		No loss.	
NIGHT :—				
	The docks at BREST and CHERBOURG.		No loss.	
	Patrol over the North SEA.		1 plane.	

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
25—11—41. (Tuesday)—*cont.*				
	LIBYA.			
	Air support to our land operations.			
	Enemy tanks and motor transport in the SHEFERZEN and SIDI OMAR districts.	Fires started.		
	Air combats over the SIDI REZEGH and SIDI OMAR areas.	10 planes.		2 planes.
	An aerodrome at AGEDABIA.	A petrol tanker set ablaze.		
	A petrol tanker and a number of lorries on the road south of BARCE.			
	Shipping in the BENGHAZI harbour.		5 planes.	
	(By Russian planes.)			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Infantry, Artillery, air combats and aircraft over the aerodromes along the entire Front.		5 planes.	33 planes.
26—11—41. (Wednesday).				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	DAY :—			
	Enemy patrol vessels and barges in the Straits of DOVER.			
	NIGHT :—			
	The port of EMDEN.			
	Other objectives in North West GERMANY.			
	The docks at OSTEND.	...	1 plane.	...
	LIBYA.			
	Enemy tanks, armoured fightings vehicles and motor transport, in the battle area of LIBYA.			
	Tanks, troops and ammunition lorries in the neighbourhood of EL ADEM and SIDI OMAR.			
	Tanks and lorries on the TRIGH-CAPUZZO road and ED DUDA district.			
	Motor transport on the coastal road of the Gulf of SIRTE.			
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes along the whole of the Eastern Front.		4 planes.	19 planes.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
27—11—41. (Thursday)				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	DAY :—			
	A supply ship off HAGUE.	Sunk.		
	An enemy convoy near the coast of NORMANDY.	A supply ship and the flak ships sunk.		
	Air combat over the ENGLISH-CHANNEL.			2 fighters.
	Aircraft on the ground at the BERCK aerodrome.			
	Shipping at BOULOGNE.		3 fighters.	
	NIGHT:—			
	The railways and industrial districts of DUSSELDORF.			
	The docks at OSTEND.			
	Aerodromes in the Low Countries.			
	LIBYA.			
	An encampment of motor transport and dumps in the TRIGH-CAPUZZO GASR, EL ARYID and EL ADEM-ACROMA districts.	Heavily damaged.		
	Tanks, motor transport and aircraft on the ground at EL GAZALA.	Fires started.		2 planes destroyed
	Barracks, enemy personnel and motor traffic near MELLAHA aerodrome.			
	Motor lorries near EL ADEM.			1 fighter.
	Aerodrome at AGEDABIA.			
	Aerial combat over AUGILA.			1 plane.
	Landing ground at DERNA.	Enemy aircraft damaged.		
	Enemy motor transport near SIDI-OMAR.			
	Enemy vehicles at BARDIA.	Set on fire.		
	MEDITERRANEAN.			
	A liner escorted by a destroyer in the central MEDITERRANEAN.	Both sunk.		
	ABYSSINIA.			
	Enemy positions in the AZOZO, AMBAZZO, GONDAR and MALDIBA regions.		4 planes.	

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Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
27—11—41. (Thursday)—*cont.*				
	ITALY.			
	Royal Arsenal, a tarpedo factory, industrial installations, oil storage tanks and railway station at NAPLES.	Many fires broke out. Very heavily damaged.		
	(By Russian planes)			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes along the whole battle field.		13 planes.	39 planes.
	German communications behind the German armies.			
28—11—41. (Friday).				
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	DAY :—			
	Enemy supply ships off the NORWEGIAN coast.	A tanker ; sunk two more vessels damaged.		
	Enemy shipping off the DUTCH coast.			
	NIGHT :—			
	No information available.			
	MEDITERRANEAN.			
	A large merchantship in the Central MEDITERRANEAN.	The ship hit 5 times.		
	LIBYA.			
	Motor transport at MARTUBA and on the TRIGH-CAPUZZO, BARDIA—TOBRUK and EL GUBBI—FAIDA roads as well as in the BARCE and EL GAZALA areas.	Fires and explosions started. Very heavy damage.		
	Aircraft on the aerodrome at GAZALA			1 plane, many damaged.
	Moles, shipping and stores at BENGHAZI.	2 ships hit directly.		
	Aerodrome and aircraft on the ground at CASTEL BENITO.	Many planes destroyed; fires started.	7 planes.	

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	British and Russian air losses.	Enemy aircraft losses.
28—11—41.	**(Friday.)**—*cont.*			
	(By Russian planes).			
	EASTERN FRONT.			
	Air combats, aircraft on the aerodromes Infantry and Artillery along the whole Eastern Front.		11 planes.	60 planes.
29—11—41.	**(Saturday).**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.			
	No information as to day and night operations over EUROPE.			
	LIBYA.			
	Motorised forces in the EL ADEM and SIDI REZEGH areas.	Heavy damage.		
	Storage dumps and tents at EL ADEM.	Fires started.		
	Air combats over the battlefield.			150 planes.

ENEMY Air Raids over BRITAIN, BRITISH Territories and RUSSIA.

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	Enemy aircraft losses.	British and Russian air losses.
25—11—41.	**(Tuesday)**			
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	Several points in South-west ENGLAND.	Damage to houses; a few casualties.	1 plane.	
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow	...	3 planes.	
26—11—41.	**(Wednesday.)**			
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	North-east coast of ENGLAND.	No casualties.		

Date.	Targets.	Damage caused by air bombardment.	Enemy aircraft losses.	British and Russian air losses.
26—11—41. (Wednesday)—*cont.*				
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow	...	2 planes.	
	Communications behind the Russian lines.			
27—11—41. (Thursday).				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	A few points in East ANGLIA and South-east ENGLAND.			
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow	...	15 planes.	
28—11—41. (Friday)				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	Scattered points in West ENGLAND and South WALES	Damage slight and casualties few.	1 plane.	
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow **Leningrad**	...	19 planes.	
29—11—41. (Saturday).				
	BRITAIN.			
	No information available.			
	NORTHERN IRELAND.			
	Slight enemy air activity over Northern IRELAND.			
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow			
30—11—41. (Sunday.)				
	BRITAIN.			
NIGHT :—				
	A single point in South-west ENGLAND.			
	MEDITERRANEAN.			
	Malta	... Driven away.		
	RUSSIA.			
	Moscow			

SIDE LIGHTS.

READ THE OFFENSIVE RIGHT. Our action in LIBYA does "open up a second land-front against the common enemy," but it was NOT undertaken in answer to popular clamour—much of it misinformed and misdirected. It was patiently and carefully prepared over many months—and I don't suppose the strenuous calls for material aid by our Russian allies made that preparation any easier to complete!—and it is part of the general war strategy of the Allies. The first two weeks of contact with the enemy have been highly encouraging; but it is the undertaking of the campaign itself which is the more significant. The immediate objective was declared in Mr. Churchill's speech of November 20, as clearly as it has been emphasised on the radio since. "If enemy ARMOUR is destroyed or seriously defeated and his air power dominated, the plight of his infantry and artillery.........would evidently become serious." *Accha*!—and this morning we hear that the whole of the enemy's tank-strength in North AFRICA is still within the imprisoning and contracting arms of the Eighth Army.

But beyond our opportunity of destroying the enemy in the Western Desert, and eliminating the Axis threat to EGYPT and the left flank of our whole MIDDLE EAST position, there are some really big considerations to remark.

(*a*) A campaign on a large scale has been launched after two years of war, when a successful enemy has at last been forced to throw EVERYTHING into a bid for quick victory. 'CYRENAICA' will be an underlined name on the whole-war map, psychological or strategical.

(*b*) The offensive gives proof of what we have long wanted to know, namely that the Allies' war potential has mounted and continues to mount, very swiftly. British tanks are now in action on a large scale on two big fronts, MOSCOW, and LIBYA, and American armaments on land and in the air give the lie direct to German propaganda that tangible help from U. S. A. is only a British smoker's dream!

(*c*) Mr. Cyril Lakin (B. B. C.) expresses our last deduction better than we could. "Our willingness to take the initiative in North AFRICA at a time when the peace of the Pacific is nearer to being disrupted than ever before, argues that we are satisfied with the preparations which we have made against all eventualities."

The first Libyan campaign destroyed the Italian army, saved Egypt, and facilitated the conquest of Mussolini's Empire. This second compaign has a

greater aim. It is, as the Italian broadcasts admit, the first phase of a battle *for complete mastery of the Mediterranean,* with all that that might imply for West AFRICA, for ITALY, and for the trembling, confused and tortured lands of Southern EUROPE.

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THE EPIC OF TOBRUK. I saw a news-reel yesterday made in TOBRUK. Huge columns of sand where the enemy bombs fell, A-A guns swinging, recoiling and spouting into day or night skies, battered enemy lorries towed or dragged through the defences into the repair shops, gun-carrying tanks swinging into line and swiftly disappearing into a shell-torn distance, and into and out of tunnels, bearded, sun-cooked, dust-grimed humans, naked to the waist, running stooped and sweating — indomitable desert-rats now, happily, to become triumphant Adonises again. (Surely no group of young men the world over can compare in looks and physique with these magnificent Australians).

Brackish water, very plain rations, very few luxuries; appalling heat, constant gun-fire (sometimes 3500 shells a day whined into TOBRUK) and the harsh change of temperature of the desert nights of late; persistent dive-bombing attacks and enemy tank-thrusts — in short a combination of danger, dirt and monotony comparable only to FLANDERS in 1914-15...all this have this garrison faced and seen through for seven months!

"Not even the litttle ships" said a German broadcast five months ago, "can save TOBRUK, which has become a fortress with no way out." Ha! ha!, say we, and we salute General Morshead and his magnificent little command with hearts full of amazed admiration.

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WRETCHED VICHY. We can hardly have hoped to take the offensive in LIBYA without bringing the French African possessions again into the limelight. TUNIS, ALGERIA and MOROCCO at a time like this would clearly be a great value as bases to hard-pressed Axis troops. Again ORAN, ALGIERS and BIZERTA in enemy hands would threaten British sea-communications both east and west of GIBRALTAR, and also consolidate a block of enemy territory comprising the whole of north-west AFRICA down to DAKAR, with road and rail communications between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

Vichy, therefore, is going to have to play a role of some kind at once, and the dismissal of Weygand is the first hint of the imminence of extra German pressure. A recent American announcement of certain action to be taken in the matter of French mercantile vessels in her ports, if the French Fleet should be forced into anti-Allied action, is another...

It is no good shutting our eyes to the possibilities. The British Government certainly haven't; they have gone into this offensive with their eyes fully open. Nothing that Vichy can do now will be a surprise. How could it be after their performances of the past year, culminating with those French freighters from the east which scuttled themselves rather than disclose their cargoes to an American naval patrol?

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FRUITS OF BLACKMAIL. Nevertheless, we had better tot up the various Nazi assets in AFRICA which they have screwed out of prostrate FRANCE through the subservience of the sinister Darlan.

(i) Weygand's attitude that the Armistice terms would be faithfully applied as long as German infiltration into French colonial territory were discouraged, has now been vitiated by his removal. Pétain has obviously withdrawn his support from his faithful companion.

So, under the familiar guise of Armistice Commissions, not less than four to five thousand Germans, under a Captain Von Kraus, have long been busy fortifying DAKAR, CASABLANCA and MERS EL KEBIR.

(ii) The *New Chronicle* correspondent said, on Nov. 8, that the Armistice Commission in MOROCCO has now reached so great a volume that it can almost be regarded as an army of invasion.

(iii) A son of Baron Von Neurath is now in TUNIS at the head of a Nazi mission "inspecting" ORAN and BIZERTA.

(iv) The French Army in North AFRICA, whatever its sentiments and despite its numbers, cannot be expected to resist German military penetration effectively, without adequate arms, equipment and food.

(v) "Collaboration," in the German sense, is nothing short of root-and-branch Gallophobia. They have not the very smallest intention of benefiting FRANCE, as is shown by their continual incitement of the Moors to separatism, and their open encouragement of Spanish claims as against French claims in MOROCCO.

To sum up, therefore, the only role that we can now *expect* the VICHY Government to play is that of open allies of the Nazis, for it now consists wholly of yes-men equally regardless of real French sentiment, who have already staked their future on Hitler's success. As early as March this year, Count de Brinon openly said: "If we believe that ENGLAND has lost the war... we must come to an agreement about collaboration in AFRICA. It is to our advantage that at the moment British influence collapses, we should associate among the nations...sensitive...to the prestige of the German victor."

But, in addition to the influence a British victory in LIBYA must have, there are some very encouraging factors to set against this nasty picture.

(i) French Equatorial AFRICA (GABON, MIDDLE CONGO, UBANGI-SHARI, the CHAD Territory and the Mandated CAMEROONS) by adhering to the Free French movement, has closed a big gap in Allied territory between West and East AFRICA.

(ii) The western flank of the SUDAN is thus protected, while the southern borders of Italian (?) LIBYA are exposed to Free French attack—and the CHAD people are good fighters!

(iii) AMERICA has long been watching the situation in DAKAR, and can also send supplies almost unhampered through the Free French ports of GABON and the CAMEROONS, to say nothing of running air-routes between the Atlantic and the Red Sea.

(iv) U. S. A. have extended the Lease and Lend provisions to General de Gaulle's forces, while BRITAIN is consolidating the support of these West African lands by fixing equitable exchange rates for their franc, and by buying whole crops of cocoa and cotton and all existing stocks of hides, skins, wax and glue.

And perhaps above all, AMERICA is making it clear to Vichy that the extensive aid she has been giving to FRANCE'S ill-nourished population, as well as diplomatic relations, must cease at any open indication of Vichy's final subservience to BERLIN.

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EXPLODED BRAGGADOCIO. In the first week of October Hitler launched a new offensive against the Russians, "the last mighty blow which will shatter this adversary before the onset of winter", he called it.

Winter is now closing in. While MOSCOW holds out gallantly, and M. Lozowsky announces that the Russians will deny the enemy either winter quarters or a winter lull, in the north round LENINGRAD and in the south round ROSTOV the turn of the tide seems to have begun. The German High Command at any rate, seems to have abandoned "the last mighty blow" idea, for their apparent tactics now are to encircle the Russian central armies by striking across the lifelines by which they, and the capital hold out the northern and southern arteries from the Baltic and the CAUCASUS, so vital to British and American supplies. Hence the fury of the fighting in the central sector during the past fortnight, probably made all the more vicious by the news of Timoshenko's notable successes in the Donetz basin.

Our Allies' MOSCOW armies are undoubtedly hard pressed by this threat of encirclement, but if Zukhov's group have once more forced the Germans out of TIKHVIN, and the southern group at TULA give way no faster than they appear to be doing at present, not only are the Germans not going to "shatter this adversary before the onset of winter (!)", but they are going to find their own enormous forces deployed in the open in terribly severe weather for a good many weeks, a situation most dangerous for the whole Axis plan unless they can provide their troops with a constant flow of hot food comforts and warm clothing.

We do not want to be over-optimistic, but it does rather look as though instead of hamstringing the main Russian defence, and their beloved capital, the hitherto victorious invaders are going to be hard put to it to avert an enormous disaster.

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SOME SPEAKING FIGURES. GERMANY and German-controlled countries just before the Russian campaign, were using 12,500,000 tons of oil and synthetic substitutes per annum.

Experts assess the **extra** consumption involved in the Russian campaign at certainly over 400,000 tons a month. Between June 20 and now, therefore at least 2½ million tons must have been withdrawn from stock.

The same experts reckon that German **reserve stocks** at the time of the invasion may have been 5,000,000 tons, but cannot have exceeded 6,000,000. In other words not much less than half their reserves have now been consumed.

Remembering, therefore, that of the balance a good proportion must be perpetually 'immobilised' e. g. those stocks in transit, and those being used to maintain the enormous numbers of depots all over EUROPE, the margin now available for excess expenditure (i. e. field service proper) must be strictly limited.

The Germans advertised their great drive to the CAUCASUS as a deadly blow to Russian resources and Russian communications. It seems much likely that they were **forced** on this so-far unprofitable adventure by their own **desperate** need for oil !

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OF LOCAL INTEREST. (a) The "V" Diary is selling beyond our highest expectations and by the time this goes to Press, we shall have completed a third printing. This week has

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• brought orders from places as far apart as PESHAWAR, BOMBAY, HYDERABAD (Deccan), KABUL and TUTICORIN.

(b) The Bureau express their acknowledgments to the Darbar for the recent Supplement to the Administration Report, and to the Editor of the College magazine for his courteous reference to their activities in his last issue.

THE WESTERN INVASION RACKET

An All India Radio talk in dialogue form

by

Francis Watson

Announcer: *What do you really think of this idea of invading Germany from the west while she is fighting in the east?*

F. W.—I think it's magnificent.

Voice.—*Well, I rather feel the same. But some people seem to think it isn't possible.*

F. W.—That's quite another question. Let's take this thing slowly and sensibly. I said the idea was magnificent. I did not say it was sound. Cast your mind back a little and you'll see what I mean. Look at that calendar, for instance.

Voice.—*November the fourteenth.*

F. W.—Yes, November the fourteenth nineteen-forty-one. And on November the fourteenth nineteen-forty, a big force of German bombers raided Coventry. You know what they did to that English town just a year ago—much less than they said they did to it, but enough to make it a pretty grim memory.

Voice.—*Yes—the whole world has heard of Coventry. But what are you getting at?*

F. W.—Well, go back a little further, to September of last year: France out of the war, Italy in on the wrong side, Japan watching a barometer that certainly seemed to be falling steeply for Britain; America showing anxiety and sympathy, but not as yet doing very much about it; the German army of invasion rehearsing at its Channel bases, the German air force pouring bombs on British cities and ports, the British army snatched from Dunkirk without weapons or equipment; the navy with

the world's biggest job to do under the world's worst conditions; and in Africa Graziani all warmed up to add Egypt to Mussolini's Empire. *That's* why it's magnificent that one year later people should be clamouring for Britain to walk in and finish Germany on her own soil.

Voice.—*Yes, it's..............almost miraculous. I was pretty pessimistic myself a year ago. Now I think most people believe that Britain just can't and won't be beaten. But one wants a bit more than that. After all, since we're using the word "magnificent", what about the Russians?*

F. W.—Superlatives are cheap these days. We'll have to go back to Churchill's phrase on another occasion. It's their finest hour.

Voice.—*And they should be helped. That's what people really feel about it all. Fine phrases won't save them.*

F. W.—What makes you think they're not being helped ?

Voice.—*Oh, tanks and so on. They're getting there, I know. But it seems a very complicated business. Are these tanks and supplies getting to Russia quick enough to decide the issue?*

F. W.—They're certainly getting there quicker than they would if they tried to fight their way right across Germany.

Voice.—*Well, yes..............But my point is that this terrific German pressure on Russia should be relieved by attacking the enemy from the other side.*

F. W.—The enemy *is* being attacked from the other side—by the R. A. F.

Voice.—*It doesn't seem to make much difference.*

F. W.—Not to you, perhaps, sitting comfortably here in Delhi. But if you were in Germany, or doing forced labour at one of the German bases in western Europe, I think you might take a different view. Ten thousand tons of bombs in three months—well, you'd notice it. Even Goebbels has noticed it, and said so—at last.

Voice.—*Do the Russians notice it ?*

F. W.—They would if it stopped. It was revealed some weeks ago, for instance, that the R. A. F. offensive was keeping nearly half of Germany's fighter aircraft busy in the west—away from Russia.

Voice.—*In other words, although things are bad, they might be worse? That still doesn't seem enough. What we want to see is an invasion of Germany by a land-force, so that her armies—or some of them—should be drawn away from Russia. And from what I read of Stalin's speech the other day, that's what he wants to see, too.*

F. W.—We all want to see it. I rather suspect that even Hitler wouldn't mind seeing it just now—but I'll come to that later. Stalin has told his people that the British are with them to the end—and the Americans too in their own way. Stalin has also held out the natural—I might almost say the inevitable-prospect of the opening of another land-front against the enemy. He didn't say exactly when, and he didn't say exactly where. There are, after all, several possible doors to Hitler's stronghold, any one of which may one day be battered in. Did you expect Stalin—or Churchill either for that matter—to make an advance announcement of the time and the place?

Voice.—*Of course not. But I can't help thinking he meant an attack on German territory across the English Channel.*

F. W.—He may have meant that, or he may not. In either case I'm sure he was heard with close attention in Germany—for one thing because he was speaking from the place where Hitler intended to be some time ago. But let me remind you of some other things that Stalin has said. A number of important people travelled very far and very fast from Britain and America to hear what the Russian leader had to say at the Moscow Conference. Stalin told them what Russia wanted, how she could best be helped. He told them very clearly and in great detail, both as to kind and quantity. And the quantities he asked for were not light. The answer was that America and Britain could and would fulfil all Russia's demands, and with a tremendous effort they've been getting on with it. It may not sound so romantic as sending men into desperate situations, but it's what the Russians want and it demands labour, sacrifice *and risk.* It's a battle on its own, and a gigantic one.

Voice.—*Well, that* is *rather a new way of looking at it. But surely it would be more effective to weaken Germany quickly than to strengthen Russia slowly.*

F. W.—Yes, if you know a way of weakening Germany quickly.

Voice.—*I mean by invading her from the other side. By dispersing her armies so that they have to fight on two fronts at the same time. Then instead of being strong on one front they would be weak on two. It seems to me to be a simple matter of arithmetic.*

F. W.—All right, let's do some arithmetic. I assume, first of all, that you don't particularly want the Middle East and India to be laid open to the enemy by transferring the Army of the Nile to western Europe?

Voice.—*Of course not. What about all the troops in England? We have been told how formidable they are, and how well they're armed. We've seen pictures of them in training and defence exercises. Now we think there's a good chance for them to get busy.*

F. W.—Well, as a matter of fact I think that if we had time I could convince you that the best place for those men to be at the present moment is in Britain. But we'll leave that open. For the sake of argument I'll accept your suggestion that the first-line troops should be taken off their job of defending the central citadel of all the anti-Axis forces. Let's say that the risk should be taken of sending them over to the Continent. And now for the arithmetic. There are a lot of figures that we're not told, of course. But Commander Stephen King-Hall, who knows something about it, has taken 15 divisions as the round figure that would be released if the risk were taken. Actually it's his own sum that I'm going to do for you now.

Voice.—*All right. Go ahead.*

F. W.—Well now, the object of the whole business is to draw German troops away from Russia, isn't it? You know something of the huge number engaged in that struggle. How much of the German strength ought we to try to divert?

Voice.—*Oh, I don't think I could work that out.*

F. W.—Never mind, it's been done for you by a British newspaper that has advocated your own view. What is required, it seems, is to draw as many as 30 German divisions from the Eastern Front. Now the next question—which we seem to have overlooked so far—is: how many troops have the Germans got stationed in Western Europe to guard against any such attack? Remember, Hitler has had a long time in which to think of that. As early as December last he began to talk publicly of defending Germany instead of invading Britain.

Voice.—*Again you'll have to give me the number.*

F. W.—I can't tell you all the plans of the German General Staff, I'm afraid. But it is possible on available evidence to reach a rough estimate, and it's been put at between 20 and 25 divisions. Add to these the 30 divisions you want to take away from the Russian front and you have 55 German divisions to meet, in their own prepared positions, a British invading force of 15. I grant you the British army has faced odds like this before. They'd do it again if they had to. But isn't it a good deal to ask? As I said before, it's a magnificent idea, but is it a sound one?

Voice.—*It is beginning to look rather shaky, I admit.*

F. W.—Shaky? We've hardly begun. We haven't touched yet on the little problem of landing armoured divisions from the sea, with adequate naval protection if any on a hostile shore, under constant bombing. For they'd get the bombing all right. The *Luftwaffe* haven't melted away, even if it's

avoiding Britain just now. And the odd thing is that many of the people who are urging the British to walk into this situation are just the ones who condemned British strategy as foolhardy after the epic operations in Greece and Crete.

Voice.—*Just a minute. I've thought of something else. You talked about landing on a hostile shore. But the people of the occupied countries are not hostile to Britain. On the contrary we're told that 90 per cent. of them hope for a British victory, and that thousands of them are working for it in all sorts of ways. A British landing would rally all these people as open allies. It would be the Germans who would be fighting in hostile country.*

F. W.—A moment ago I suggested that you were asking too much of armed and trained British soldiers. Now you're proposing to do the trick with unarmed and untrained European civilians. By one means or another the mobilised armies of all the countries concerned have been put out of action. Is the peasant with his pitch-fork or the labourer with his hatchet—or even the bank clerk with his umbrella—are these brave folk to be asked to face the German war-machine? Imagine yourself to be Hitler—no offence meant, I assure you—with twenty divisions disposed over the areas concerned, and his Gestapo busy with their card-indexes and their revolvers. British landings are signalled. What do you do? Give everybody a piece of cake, or shoot from both hips?

Voice.—*Now you're getting me into a corner.*

F. W.—And that's where you'd be if you tried to double the strength of the British invading force by putting sand in the gear-box of a German staff car. Mind you, I'm not minimising the importance of the sabotage and the resistance that the Germans are already meeting from courageous people throughout Occupied Europe. I am not minimising its depressing effects on the Germans themselves. Hitler faces difficulties wherever he goes. Nobody outside Germany wants him, and quite a few inside Germany aren't exactly fond of him. These are signs of increasing significance. In the end they will help to break Germany. Even now Germany's war is being slowed up and her strength is being dissipated in many ways. But—and it's a big but—the moment when all these forces can unite effectively to strike the blow they are patiently nursing will come after, and not before big German military reverse.

Voice.—*It's a question of time then?*

F. W.—It's a question of time and what we do with it. Not a question of waiting, but a question of working. But before we conclude our little chat and get back to work, let me quote a rather neat remark by my old

friend A. P. Herbert, who has made so many neat remarks on serious subjects. He said he couldn't understand why people were indignant because a British minister had said we didn't intend to invade France. After all, Hitler said the same thing for years.

In other words, why tell Hitler when or where we're going to hit him? It's really as simple as that.

"BOMBER COMMAND"

[*Fifth Instalment of the Air Ministry's recent best-seller*].

VALUE OF FORTRESS AIRCRAFT

EXPERIENCE GAINED IN EARLY PAMPHLET RAIDS.

ATTACKS ON BATTLESHIPS IN BREST HARBOUR.

Before proceeding a word may be said of the "Fortress" aircraft. These aircraft rely mainly on the height and speed which they attain to avoid trouble They do not fly outside the range of enemy fighters, but at the height at which they operate the manoeuvring power of fighters is greatly reduced.

Fortresses have many new devices about which little can be said at present. The Sperry Bombsight with which they are fitted is an instrument of remarkable precision. A long course of training in its use is necessary—so complicated is it—but the bomb-aimer, once proficient, can achieve most gratifying results.

Their engines are super-charged, and powerful enough to take aircraft to a height at which without oxygen a man would be unconscious in six minutes and dead in thirty. So excellent have its design and construction proved to be that the Fortress is habitually flown many thousands of feet higher than it was designed to fly. Its ceiling has not yet been accurately discovered. Never before in history was man's metal, stationary or moving, taken to such heights.

Great difficulty has been caused by the frosting which, at a very high altitude where the temperature is in the neighbourhood of-50 degrees Centigrade, covers all the windows with a thick coating of rime. New ingenious American devices overcome this trouble.

The crew numbers seven—two pilots, an observer-navigator, a wireless operator, a wireless operator air-gunner and two air-gunners. They wear electrically heated clothing. To avoid breaking out into sweat, which would freeze on them and keep them cold no matter what they are wearing, they put on this in stages as the aircraft climbs. They are supplied with oxygen, of which many spare bottles are carried, in special containers distributed all over the aircraft.

The effect, both physical and mental, on a man flying at the great height at which these bombers operate is generally speaking severe, and only men who succeed in passing special tests carried out in pressure chambers form the crews. They run a twofold risk unknown at lower altitude. Their bodies may become affected by strain and then they experience a form of cramp which may immobilise them, blind and speechless with pain, till a lower level is reached, and their minds may become subject to alternating fits of exaggerated hope or despair, between which only the strongest will can strike a true balance.

Much has been written about the early pamphlet raids. But apart from the value in themselves of the pamphlets which were dropped, the value to the R. A. F. was of the greatest. In the first place information about all kinds of objectives which might at any moment become objects of attack was obtained, and the crews were able to become familiar with the whereabouts of aerodromes, factories, power-stations, roads and railways in conditions very similar to those in which they were subsequently bombed.

Secondly, such raids proved of great importance in the training of air crews. They were carried out at night, and they were carried out in all weathers, and lasted anything from six to twelve hours. As tests for navigation and endurance they had no equal.

Leaflet raids call for great endurance and sometimes an even higher degree of skill than bombing raids. The adventures of the Whitley crews were numerous. In one, a defect in the oxygen apparatus caused a shortage of the supply. The crew, however, succeeded in dropping their pamphlets, but "such was the condition of the navigator and wireless operator at this stage that every few minutes they were compelled to lie down and rest on the floor of the fuselage. The cockpit heating system was useless. Everyone was frozen and had no means of alleviating his distress. The navigator and commanding officer were butting their heads on the floor and navigation table, in an endeavour to experience some other form of pain as a relief from the awful feeling of frost-bite and lack of oxygen."

In the sterner work of the command the German battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* have been repeatedly bombed at Brest. They were first attacked by Bomber Command aircraft on the night of March 30–31, 1941. They have

certainly been hit, the *Gneisenau* three times in three nights in April and again in July. There have been reports in neutral newspapers that she has been heavily damaged, and that one bomb killed 128 of the crew. While no definite final confirmation of these reports have been received, they have been most persistent.

Both the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau* have been attacked repeatedly from all heights. On the night of April 4–5, for example, one of our aircraft in the face of blinding searchlights and heavy anti-aircraft fire, hit the *Gneisenau* with a 1,900 lb. bomb from 1,000 feet. The *Scharnhorst* has been hit twice, perhaps three times, under water, and damage has also probably been caused to her by torpedo attack when she was lying in harbour. It was carried out by an aircraft of the Coastal Command which never returned.

The *Prinz Eugen* was hit on the night of July 1–2. Serious damage was inflicted, and it is believed that between 40 and 50 of her crew were killed. At the moment there is very little doubt that the *Gneisenau* has been severely damaged, repaired and then damaged again, and that the *Prinz Eugen* is still incapable of putting to sea.

The difficulties of the attack on Brest are not always realised. The Germans have done their utmost since it fell into their hands to make it immune from air attack. In this they have not succeeded, but an assault upon it by bomber aircraft is a hazardous operation. Brest is protected by a very heavy concentration of A. A. guns, by a balloon barrage and by a formidable array of searchlights. There are also patrols of fighters on the watch to intercept our bombers. When weather conditions are suitable a smoke screen is laid over the targets in the docks area, in order to make the task of the bomb-aimers yet more difficult, and it is not uncommon for a pilot to report that his aircraft has been held in the cone of the searchlights for more than five minutes while he was over the target.

Brest has been attacked 69 times up to July 10. Whatever may be the amount of damage inflicted on the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau* and *Prinz Eugen* one broad fact is latent for all to see. Not one of these three ships, vital elements as they are in the Battle of the Atlantic, has taken any part in it for a long time. Another possibly even more important result has also been achieved. There is very little doubt that, by keeping the *Gneisenau* and the *Scharnhorst* in port, the Bomber Command compelled the German Admiralty to send out the *Bismarck*, in a desperate attempt to regain the initiative which it was rapidly losing. The sinking of that great warship was thus indirectly, but nonetheless surely, due to the part played by our bombers.

LARGE-SCALE USE OF FIGHTER-BOMBERS.
VALUE IN POINT-BLANK ATTACKS.
RISKS RUN BY PILOTS.

by

(*Oliver Stewart. In a recent B. B. C. Talk*).

A Russian writer on aviation said the other day that there had only been one tactical novelty in this war, and that that was the large-scale use by the Germans of a fighter-bomber, the Messerschmitt 110.

It was an interesting point, and I suppose that in some ways this aeroplane can be called a new type. It was actually built as a fighter-bomber, but there is no novelty about using fighters on bombing duties. In 1914—18, fighters were carrying small bombs towards the latter period, and now in this present war we have the Hawker Hurricane Fighter-Bomber.

We announced recently that it was in action and had scored a notable success against a target in enemy-occupied France. The target was a munitions factory, and the formation of Hurricanes was escorted by wings of Spitfires, which flew much higher up.

The Hurricanes carried bombs with a short delay action, so that they could drop them from a very low level without risk of being damaged by the flying fragments.

Obviously a Hurricane cannot carry the weight of bombs that a Blenheim for instance can carry, but the Hurricane pilots made up for any lack of bomb weight by an extremely fine point-blank attack.

They relied on the Spitfires above to keep their tails clear of enemy fighters, and went right down on the factory, skimming its roofs as they released their bombs. The Spitfire pilots were watching the sky, ready to rush in if they saw any enemy aircraft trying to interfere with the Hurricanes, but some of them had time to glance at what was happening below, and they confirmed that the accuracy of the attack was very high, and that really is the way to get accuracy with a bomb, to go down, and put it on the target from a few feet above.

But it is the kind of attack that makes a severe demand on the pilot. You may remember how air line passengers used always to insist on aircraft with more than one engine, in fact the single engine machine almost entirely went out on the commercial lines, because it was recognized that there ought always to be the second chance to guard against a crash if there was an engine failure.

Those Hurricane pilots were in single engine machines and they were flying over enemy-occupied country, so to them the single-engine risk was much greater than it would ever be in a commercial machine.

In addition to all that, they came down to within a few feet of the ground; the mere flying hazards, excluding enemy guns and enemy aircraft, was great, and there can be no doubt that a big demand was made on those officers and sergeant pilots. Theirs was a bold and brilliant achievement.

And now for a word about the aeroplane they used. The Hurricane is the R. A F's maid of all work; it has tackled every job a fighter can tackle and a good many that fighters don't often tackle.

It has been used for high flying and low flying, by day and by night, as an eight-gun machine, and as a four-cannon machine. It has been used in almost every theatre of war; France, North Africa, Greece, Russia, and of course in the air battles over Britain last year.

I should think that the Hurricane is the most versatile fighter there has ever been, and now it has gained a new distinction by being turned into a high-speed bomber.

It is really better to call it a high-speed bomber than a fighter-bomber. A fighter-bomber is a contradiction in terms; strictly speaking there is no such thing in air war as a fighter-bomber, although the term is sometimes rather useful.

But a fighter is essentially a machine in which weight-carrying is sacrificed to speed, climb and manoeuvre, and a bomber is essentially a machine in which speed, climb, and manoeuvre are sacrificed to load. Neither type can afford to specialise to the extreme limit.

The fighter cannot reduce the duration of its flight below about an hour and a half, in order to push up its speed to the figures that can be got with weighty aeroplanes, and it must carry guns, and ammunition, though these can be cut down to a minimum as the Germans have done in their Messerschmitt 109. So the fighter, though it puts the emphasis on speed, climb and manoeuvre, is to some extent a compromise.

Similarly, the day bomber dare not reduce its speed below a certain point in order to carry a bigger bomb load, the reason being that speed is its protection. Both the fighter and the bomber are a compromise; in the so-called fighter-bomber, the compromise is rather in favour of the fighter, the bomb load is small, the speed is high, and there is plenty to show that a high speed and a small bomb load may be more useful for attacks on certain kinds of targets than a low speed and a big bomb load.

The Hurricane cannot be as efficient as a bomber in the business of conveying a load of bombs to the target, but it has the advantage that it will

be able to get through where the bomber would not get through, and to be able to get back again where the bomber would not get back.

So we come back to that old call for speed, and yet more speed ; fighters must have more speed, that is universally recognised, but bombers also must have more speed if they are to work in the daylight, and if the only way to give it to them is to reduce the bomb load then that has to be done. I can foresee a most useful career before the Hurricane High-Speed Bomber, and I should not be surprised if it gives rise to other high-speed bombers in the future.

A word on the R. A. F. casualties during a recent night raid on Germany and German-occupied territory. They were heavy casualties, the number of aircraft reported missing being 37. There was an immediate tendency to place a false construction on those losses. It was the natural outcome of the fact that the R. A. F. has nearly always managed to inflict on the enemy greater losses than it suffered itself.

If it were defending, I feel perfectly certain that the R. A. F. would now inflict greater losses than it would suffer itself. I think it is probable that it would do even better in this way now, than it did during the air battles over Britain last year.

But the R. A. F. has got other duties besides defence. It has to maintain a steady bombing pressure on the enemy, and it has had to do this during a period of the worst kind of weather.

So far as the captains and crews of our bombers are concerned, the weather has been as bad as it could be, and so in order to keep up their attack, they have deliberately taken big weather risks and gone out when the conditions have not looked favourable.

They know, everybody in the R. A. F. knows, that in those circumstances there may be heavy losses. In that sense those losses were foreseen. The R. A. F. wants to avoid heavy losses, but, while the Soviet is fighting so magnificently in the East, it intends to keep up the pressure on this side whether there are losses or not.

A TURK EXAMINES
Mr. CHURCHILL'S BALANCE SHEET.

by

Ahmet Emin Yalman.

(*From the "Vatan", Istanbul, of 2—10—41.*)

In his last speech has the British Premier been a pessimist or an optimist?

It is necessary to realise that, in his last declarations, the Premier has compelled himself, as is his custom, to be pessimistic, but optimism flows from every portion of his address.

Mr. Churchill's balance sheet can be set out like this:

Assets:—Gemany has become much weaker in the air. This is a very serious matter for her.

The tonnage of losses of British merchant shipping has been two-thirds less during the last three months than during the preceding quarter. This has resulted in an improvement in the conditions of food supplies. The working classes will be better fed. Stocks are more abundant than those of the last year. At Christmas, the British people will be able to contemplate some festivities. The time is approaching when American naval construction will be able to make up for the losses in ships.

Less war material has been destroyed during transit. England is no longer alone as she was in the past year. She has two powerful allies. Persia is also about to sign an alliance with her.

Germany has suffered enormous losses and there is a limit to sacrifice.

England possesses a land army such as she never had up to the present time. This army is in a position to repel all attempts atinvasion. She might be able even to contemplate landings on the continent to relieve the Russian army.

Russia and China possess inexhaustible reserves of moral courage.

Liabilities:—Except in the air, the initiative remains with the Germans Great Britain is not yet able to bring her power to earth.

Winter is not the ally on which one used to count. In winter the German pressure on Russia will be able to be maintained. One can expect a new thrust by the armies of the Reich.

Germany will make every effort to intensify submarine warfare during the winter.

The danger of an invasion of the British Isles is not yet remote.

KEEPING THE FAR EASTERN SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.

CHOICE BETWEEN "CONSECUTIVE" AND "CONCURRENT" WAR.

RECOGNITION OF CHINA AS A FIGHTING ALLY.

(From the Economist)

The situation in the Far East is permanently on the brink of a general war, **because Japan's policy of co-prosperity can be carried beyond a certain point**

only at the risk of war. In 1937 their policy of expansion into China reached the point of general Chinese resistance. The question is whether the Japanese have not brought all Far Eastern Powers to the same point. Co-prosperity entails Japanese control of the Russian maritime provinces and possibly Western Siberia as well; Manchuria and all China and possibly all Mongolia too; of Indo-China, Thailand and perhaps the Malay Peninsula; of the Philippines, the Netherlands Indies and very possibly all Australasia.

In the south the obstacles are the entrenched interests of other great Powers, the British Empire and the United States as well as of France and the Netherlands; in China there is the unbroken resistance of General Chiang Kai-Shek; in the north Russia has her Siberian army.

In the past year the Japanese have tested and felt these sectors of the front again and again. The defeat of the Netherlands and the collapse of France turned them southwards. Here their advance, successful in Indo-China, was checked temporarily, perhaps on the frontiers of Thailand, by a warning that Britain would regard an attack on Thailand as a menace to her own security; by the freezing of Japan's assets in the United States and the British Empire; and by signs that American public opinion was for checking Japanese advance southwards even at the risk of war.

The China sector has been re-tested in recent weeks by campaigns in Hunan and Shansi. **The past year has proved that neither by assault nor by attrition can a total Japanese victory be secured in China.**

In the north-west after an encounter at Nomanhan in 1937 the Japanese were content to let the Russian front alone. But Hitler's onslaught and the Russian retreat in the west have renewed their appetite. In recent weeks the Japanese garrison in Manchuria has certainly been increased—according to some reports to 22 divisions, according to others 35; Chinese forced labour is at work on military roads from Manchuria into Mongolia; at the same time the arrival of American war supplies in Vladivostock has been made an occasion for protests and threats to both Moscow and Washington. The question is whether the Japanese consider that the Russians' predicament in Europe has weakened them enough for expansion to be practised at their expense.

Had the Japanese confined themselves to the task of wearing out China, squeezing out foreign business and establishing undisputed control over the whole economy of China, it is almost certain that other Far Eastern Powers, more and more deeply involved in the wars of the Atlantic world, would have left Japan to go its own imperial way. The very weakness of the other Powers' Far Eastern defence has, however tempted the Japanese into the path of ultimate defeat. By threatening every Power at once, they have at last brought home to these Powers that they are all subject to the same threat. A co-ordinated system of Far Eastern defence is at last taking shape.

In the economic sphere there is the freezing of Japanese assets and the very real restrictions on Japanese trade and shipping which have been imposed by the British, American and Dutch Governments. In the military sphere proper there are the reinforcements to Malaya, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Thailand's readiness for self-defence and Britain's reinforcement on the Thai-Malayan frontier guarantee on land the approaches to Singapore.

The crux of the matter is, however, Anglo-American naval power. If the defences are to be effective in the South Seas, the process of getting "mixed up together" must go forward with the joint use of ships and bases wherever the first calls of strategy demand. The extension of Lease and Lend aid to China; the arrival in Chungking of the United States military mission; the functioning of the Burma Road—all these are promising signs of the growing recognition of China as a fighting ally in the Far East.

Something like an agreed limit—the Thai frontier—and a common stand exist in the South Seas. Because they do not exist in the north, **Vladivostock** is for the time being the weakest point in the Far Eastern line. **It is here, therefore, that General Tojo's Government is likely to try next to probe.** The Japanese are conscious of the gradual emergence of some kind of Far Eastern defence system. They are talking of "encirclement," and encirclement in the Japanese as in the German vocabulary is the aggressor's word for collective security. The question whether encirclement will drive the Japanese to war—a stock argument of appeasement—is immaterial. **This is not a choice of war or peace but a choice of consequitive or concurrent war. The Japanese would prefer a limited war** in China, a **limited** war in Siberia and a **limited** war in Malaya.

A genuine system of Far Eastern defence—a collective determination to resist with all the military resources of the A. B. C. D. Powers (America, the British Empire, China and the Dutch) and of Soviet Russia any new Japanese attempt at aggression wherever it may fall—will either check the Japanese completely or ensure that the most and not least effective resistance will be set against their predatory advance. As long as inconclusive "peace talks" between America and Japan leave America's attitude undefined; as long as Anglo-American reaction to Japanese aggression against Russia remains uncertain; as long as China's place as the centre of Far Eastern resistance is not recognised; just so long will Japan stage "hours of destiny" to make the A. B. C. D. Powers' "flesh creep," to probe the effectiveness of their will to resist, and to pull off, if possible, yet another local success. There will in fact be no peace in the Far East until all Allied Powers have squarely faced and jointly planned for the possibility of war.

THE AXIS SPEAKS—AND IS ANSWERED

A Commentary on Enemy Broadcasts to India and the Near East

For the period Nov. 15—22, 1941.

A PLAIN CASE OF DISTORTION.

"It is reported from Delhi that the British Defence authorities in India have seized three large railway repair works for the manufacture of war materials. By this action the British authorities succeeded in forcing 13,000 Indian railway workers to manufacture war materials for Britian. This indicates the failure of the British to induce Indian workers to work *voluntarily* for them."—(*German news in Hindustani, November 17, 1941*).

The Communications Member, Sir Andrew Clow, informed the authentic representatives of India's Railways on *Nov. 15*, that *13,000* men, the number so carefully abused by Goebbels, are working in Railway workshops *voluntarily* on munitions and thousands of others are being trained in Railway military units. The Railway authorities handed over three large workshops for the production of war supplies in a spirit that would pass the understanding of the Nazis.

WHEAT AND COTTON.

"The British military authorities in the Middle East are furious that Indian authorities have restricted the wheat export, and that Indian authorities have done nothing to avoid a rise in the price of wheat. The British are now threatening to seize all the wheat."—(*German news in English, November 19, 1941*).

Reversing all his previous propaganda, Goebbels suddenly discovers, for his own purposes, that the Government of India is not, after all, the mouthpiece of H. M. Government in London.

India's restriction of her wheat exports is obviously designed to prevent acute shortage and check rising prices.

Finally, supplies of wheat for Middle Eastern countries as a whole are being exported from, for example, Australia and N. America, in very much larger quantities than from India.

"A *Popolo di Roma* message states that the Egyptian Government has lowered the price for cotton. The only explanation is that Great Britain has been unable to take over her share of the Egyptian crop."—(*German news in English, November 19, 1941*).

It is common sense to grow what can be sold to people who need it. Egypt's war-time difficulties arise chiefly from the loss of European markets under Axis domination. Britain is purchasing Egyptian cotton to the seed value of £25 million and 46 million bushels of

Egyptian wheat from the 1941-42 crop. Britain could obtain both these commodities from America on Lease and Lend terms. The only explanation is that she wants to help Egypt to re-adjust her economy.

OUT OF GOOSE-STEP.

This Picture.

"No power in the world would be insane enough to invade India."—(*German news in Hindustani, 21st November 1941*).

"British Propaganda is attempting to make the world believe that British troops in Cyrenaica surprised the Axis forces. There is no question of surprise action."—(*Italian news in English, 21st November 1941*).

"The German radio says that German troops have repulsed the British attack in Cyrenaica and that a deluge of rain has prevented the continuation of the attack."—(*German Controlled Vichy Radio, 20th November 1941*).

And That.

"India will be invaded to oust the British from the country."—(*Italian news in English, 11th November 1941*).

"Your Government must inaugurate some show of action but you know you can do nothing."—(*German broadcast in English to England, 19th November 1941*).

"One would expect the result of the new offensive to be favourable to the British. It is not to be ignored that operations will not be so easy....".—(*German News in Persian and Arabic, 21st November 1941*).

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK.

"THE EXECUTION OF THE HOSTAGES MUST BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF HUMANITY".

(*German News in English, November 7, 1941*).

THE APPLE OF DISCORD.

Axis Propaganda for the Arab World.

Long before she declared war, ***Italy*** was using her Bari broadcasting station to ***spread confusion in the Arab world.*** Long before she declared war ***Germany*** sought to ***embitter the Palestine problem*** by the Nazi persecution of German Jews. It was this cold-blooded Nazi policy that increased the annual flow of Jewish immigrants into Palestine from ***4,000 to 62,000*** inside four years.

In war the *Axis* propaganda policy is to pose as the ***champions of Islam*** while their armies hold down a dozen once independent nations and their secret police ***strangle religion*** wherever they find it.

Disruption is to pave the way, as elsewhere, for domination. Read these authentic Axis statements and understand their methods. ***In the same perjured mouth are two contradictory stories.***

"It is reported from Jerusalem that Emir Abdulla had several talks with the British High Commissioner, during the past few days.

It is stated that the question of amalgamating Transjordan, Palestine and Syria and establishing a government there under Emir Abdulla was discussed. ***The Jews will be a minority in the new State.*** The report is causing consternation. The Syrians are not ready to accept Abdulla as their ruler."—(*Italian news in Arabic, 17th November 1941*).

"Britain is already taking steps to prepare the way for the ***establishment of a Jewish state*** comprising Transjordan, Palestine and Syria. In this connection, negotiation took place between the Zionist leaders and British Statesmen. To conceal the truth Britain is telling the Arabs that the proposed amalgamation is one large Arab State."—(*German news in Arabic and Persian, 3rd November 1941*).

"***Britain has again begun to make promises to the Arabs.*** Mr. Eden has asked Emir Abdulla to propagate the news among the Arabs that after the war the Arabs will be formed into one national state including Syria."—(*Italian news in English, 10th March 1941*).

"***The Arabs must be driven out of Palestine and Transjordan to make the Jewish dream of a national home become an established fact,***" said Israel Sieff in New York. We find it difficult to believe that he would have made this preposterous statement without the ***backing of the British Government***".—(*German News in English, 18th November 1941*).

"***Lord (sic) Lyttleton is striving to create an Arab Confederation.*** The Emir of Transjordan is to get the title "King of the Arabs." Fakri Nasha Shibi is to have Palestine, and Nuri Said, Iraq."—(*Italian news in Arabic, 13th November 1941*).

"Rashid Ali Abbas, the former propaganda minister, said in an interview: '***The Arabs aim at an Arab Federation, but the British undermine it.*** The final triumph of the Axis powers is bound to bring doom to the British, ***when the Muslims will enjoy freedom***".—(*Italian News in Hindustani, 19th November 1941*).

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

Pudukkottai State War Information Bureau.

1941— **LECTURE LXXIII**—(*Batch 5*).

December ...	6, Saturday ...	Town Hall ...	6.30 p. m.
	7, Sunday ...	Alangudi ...	6.00 p. m.
		Vadagadu ...	6.30 p. m.
	8, Monday ...	College (A) English ...	10.15 a. m.
		Vellanur ...	6.00 p. m.
		Puthambur ...	6.30 p. m.
	9, Tuesday ...	Thiruvarangulam ...	6.00 p. m.
		Vamban ...	6.30 p. m.
	10, Wednesday	C. S. M. High School ...	10.00 a. m.
		Rani's High School ...	10.15 a. m.
		College (B) Tamil ...	10.15 a. m.
		Cheri School ...	10.15 a. m.
		Piliyur ...	6.00 p. m.
		Kannangudi ...	6.30 p. m.
	11, Thursday ...	Pallivasal ...	6.00 p. m.
		Pillamangalam ...	6.30 p. m.
	12, Friday ...	Kolavoipatti ...	6.00 p. m.
		Kilayur (South) ...	6.30 p. m.

LECTURE LXXIV—(*Batch 1*).

	13, Saturday ...	Town Hall ...	6.30 p. m.
	14, Sunday ...	Poovarasagudi ...	6.00 p. m.
		Venkatakulam ...	6.30 p. m.
	15, Monday ...	Perungalur ...	6.00 p. m.
		Adanakkottai ...	6.30 p. m.
	16, Tuesday ...	Malampatti ...	6.00 p. m.
		Perambur ...	6.30 p. m.
	17, Wednesday	Odayalippatti ...	6.00 p. m.
		Killukottai ...	6.30 p. m.
	18, Thursday ...	Arimalam ...	6.00 p. m.
		Kilanilaikottai ...	6.30 p. m.
	19, Friday ...	Kiranur ...	6.00 p. m.
		Nallur ...	6.30 p. m.

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